United Nations E/2014/NGO/55

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 May 2014

Original: English

2014 session
Item 5 (c) of the provisional agenda*
High-level segment: annual ministerial review

Statement submitted by World Society for the Protection of Animals, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2014/1/Rev.1, annex II.

14-03887 (E) 050614

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Statement

Over 1 billion of the world's poorest people depend on animals for jobs, food, income, transport, social status or cultural identification, as well as financial security. In other words, their animals are their main productive asset. In the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want", Member States recognized that the livelihoods of farmers, including pastoralists, and the health of livestock are intertwined.

The achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially goals 1, 3, 6 and 7, can be supported by good animal welfare solutions. The World Society for the Protection of Animals works towards the urgent international recognition of animal welfare as an essential element of sustainable development. Simply put, helping animals helps people.

Global adherence to animal welfare principles have significant positive impacts on poverty eradication, food security, public health, climate change and the preservation of biodiversity. As the world's poorest people are the most vulnerable to disasters, it is also vital to integrate animal welfare into disaster resilience and emergency planning. This helps to prevent the unnecessary suffering of people and of livestock and significantly enhances post-disaster recovery.

Wild animals also provide an important source of livelihood security for poor rural communities in developing countries and the economic growth of countries as a whole via responsible ecotourism. In its resolution 65/173, the General Assembly recognized the importance of ecotourism as a means of eradicating poverty. Recently, a broad, collaborative partnership, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank, recognized that sustainable tourism is one of the most effective ways of providing employment opportunities and economic security for local communities while protecting the world's natural resources.

Gender aspects are also very relevant as poor women represent the majority of poor livestock keepers — about two thirds of them — and the welfare of their animals has a huge impact on their livelihoods and their families.

Animals should be part of, and have a lot to contribute to, the eradication of poverty, to decreasing the impact of disasters, to the protection of biodiversity and to food security and nutrition.

Additionally, animals should be considered in long-term development plans related to public health as, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), about 60 per cent of all diseases affecting people and about 75 per cent of emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic. Moreover, there are increasing concerns that the widespread non-therapeutic use of antibiotics in intensive livestock production is contributing to the emergence of antibiotic-resistant microbes. The FAO report *Edible Insects: Future Prospects for Food and Feed Security* states that "[i]ntensive animal production with high densities of animals is a starting place for many significant health issues and has been known to trigger the emergence of antimicrobial resistance".

The current failure to achieve universal food security can in part be accounted for by the lack of coordination and balance between animal-based and plant-based food production on a local, national and international scale. Globally, 53 per cent of all oil crops and 38 per cent of all cereals are used to feed livestock. To meet the vast feed demands of industrial animal production, large areas of pasture and forest have been converted to grow crops, displacing communities, limiting the grains available for people to eat and contributing to food price volatility.

Animal welfare is instrumental to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including goals 1, 3, 6 and 7, and should be taken into consideration when Member States draft the new post-2015 development framework.

Regarding the post-2015 development framework, the World Society for the Protection of Animals would suggest the following specific areas for consideration:

(a) To protect development gains and to prevent disasters pushing households below the poverty line, it is essential that the new goals assist people in maintaining those assets that are essential to their livelihoods and food security. Therefore, we recommend targets that focus on reducing disaster losses in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries by protecting livelihoods and productive assets, including livestock, working animals, tools and seeds;

(b) Food loss and waste occur during both the production and consumption phases and must therefore be addressed in both. Continuing to feed cereals to growing numbers of livestock will aggravate poverty and environmental degradation. A target aiming at the reduction of food loss and waste of all types of food and throughout the food supply chain is crucial;

(c) The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development reaffirms the necessity to promote, enhance and support more sustainable agriculture systems. In this sense, the new global development framework should include targets on increasing sustainable agriculture practices, including sustainable livestock, fishing and forestry practices as key elements for achieving food security;

(d) The crucial role of healthy marine ecosystems to sustainable development is clearly recognized in the outcome document through a commitment to protect, and restore, the health, productivity and resilience of oceans and marine ecosystems. The global community also committed to achieve significant reductions in marine debris to prevent harm to the coastal and marine environment by 2025. The expansion of the current network of marine protected areas is the most effective and sustainable route to protecting and restoring both the health and productivity of marine ecosystems and therefore should be reflected in the post-2015 development framework;

(e) Finally, access to safe and effective medicines and ensuring that essential medicines are affordable to all are key aspects of a global health goal. Of particular concern is the non-therapeutic and preventive use of antibiotics in livestock production that contributes significantly to the fast-rising antibiotic resistance in humans. Without the conservation of effective antibiotics, the task of ensuring adequate and affordable health services for all will prove impossible. That is why

reducing to zero the non-therapeutic and preventive use of antibiotics in livestock production is crucial to protect adequate and affordable health care for all.

Animal welfare contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and will contribute to the post-2015 development framework. The World Society for the Protection of Animals remains at the disposal of Member States to contribute to this long-term commitment.